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British Constitutional Liberty.

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S E R M O N,

Preached in *Broad-mead*, BRISTOL,

NOVEMBER 5, 1775.

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By CALEB EVANS, M. A.

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Printed at the particular request of many who  
heard it.

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*Et quæ tanta fuit Romam tibi causa videndi?*  
LIBERTAS: \_\_\_\_\_

*Æneadæ in ferrum pro LIBERTATE ruebant.*

VIRGIL.

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B R I S T O L:

Printed and sold by *W. Pine, T. Cadell, M. Ward,*  
&c.—And in LONDON, by *J. Buckland, G.*  
*Keith, E. and C. Dilly,* and *W. Harris, No. 70,*  
St. Paul's Church-yard.

(Price SIX-PENCE.)



## ADVERTISEMENT.

*THE following Discourse is intitled to all that candor which is due to a hasty composition, drawn up without the least view to publication. If it may in the smallest measure contribute to explain the excellent nature of the British Constitution, to those who are not conversant with subjects of this kind; to confute the calumnies thrown out against the friends of Liberty by their malignant adversaries; and to excite a spirit of genuine loyalty to our illustrious Sovereign, as the PATRON OF LIBERTY, and the GUARDIAN of that glorious CONSTITUTION for the establishment of which our venerable ancestors bled; the Author's utmost wishes with respect to this slender performance will be accomplished.*

BRISTOL,

Nov. 8. 1775.

A 2

# MEMORIAL

CHAP. V. 13.

...we have been called to liberty:  
not that we are not liberty as an occasion to the  
right, but by our former condition.

THESE words, though they were  
originally made use of by the apostle  
upon an occasion somewhat different  
from the present, do yet most naturally  
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being no further occasion for them.



A

S E R M O N, &c.

GAL. V. 13.

*Brethren, ye have been called to LIBERTY:  
only use not liberty as an occasion to the  
flesh, but by love serve one another.*

THESE words, though they were originally made use of by the apostle upon an occasion somewhat different from the present, do yet most naturally lead us into a train of ideas and reflections highly suitable to the return of this auspicious day. The liberty the apostle refers to, is liberty from the bondage of the Mosaic rites, liberty from those burdensome, expensive, painful rites, which though required under the former dispensation, were now done away, there being no further occasion for them.

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But

But were the first Christians called in *this respect* to liberty? And are not we as Britons and Protestants called to that civil and religious liberty which we have the happiness this day to celebrate? It cannot therefore be esteemed a perversion of the apostle's language to adopt it upon the present occasion. Were the apostle himself alive and to address you as I now do, I verily believe, that with an immediate reference to the nature and design of this distinguished day, he would be ready to say to you in the words first read—*Brethren, ye have been called to LIBERTY: tempering his address with this useful caution, only use not liberty as an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.*

The apostle *Paul* was a genuine son of freedom. He was a free-born *Roman*, as he told the chief captain *Lyfias*, and knew how to prize and improve so valuable a privilege. When the magistrates of *Philippi*, who had cruelly used and unjustly imprisoned the apostle and his companion *Silas*, sent the serjeants to them the next morning to let them go, *Paul* sent back this noble  
and

and truly patriotic answer. See Acts xvi. 37. *They have beaten us openly, uncondemned, being ROMANS, and have cast us into prison;—and now, do they thrust us out privily? Nay verily, but let them come themselves and fetch us out.* Which they were accordingly glad to do. Though neither the apostle Paul, nor Christ himself, nor any of his apostles ever pretended to establish any one particular form of civil government in the world, (that being foreign to the design of the gospel,) yet it is evident they never meant to *preclude* any man from the fullest enjoyment of those civil or religious privileges to which he might be intitled.

The subject naturally leads us to consider,

- I. The LIBERTY to which we have been called.
- II. In what respects we have been called to this liberty.
- III. To what we are called respecting this liberty.

IV. The caution given us against the abuse of it. Concluding with a general improvement of the whole.

I. Let us consider that liberty to which we have been called,

But I mean not here to give you a dissertation upon liberty at large, or to describe the several kinds of liberty, natural, philosophical, mental and moral, to which as men and as Christians we have been called: but all I intend, is to give you, according to the nature and design of this anniversary, some account of that liberty to which as free-born Britons we are called, and which it is our duty and privilege this day to celebrate. This liberty is either *civil* or *religious*.

1. We are called to civil liberty.

It is impossible to enter into society without parting with some portion of our natural liberty, which may be considered as the sacrifice we make to obtain the greater advantages which result from a well-regulated civil government, than can be enjoyed in a state of nature and anarchy



anarchy. And it has been universally allowed by the ablest politicians, who have not sold themselves to tyranny and tyrants, that the *perfection* of civil government consists in the preservation of *natural liberty* as far as ever it can be made to consist with that good order and regularity which is the very end of government itself, and without which every society must be reduced to a state of confusion. Nor can this perfection be found any where in so great a degree as it is in the British constitution: the several parts of which are so closely connected together and nicely adjusted, and the operations of which are so admirably calculated to act as a counterpoise to one another, that whilst the power of the crown is firmly secured on the one hand, the liberty of the subject is inviolably safe on the other, so that it can never be infringed but by his own criminal concurrence, nor the power of the crown be exerted but for the good of the people, unless they themselves feloniously contribute, from mercenary, venal motives, to their own destruction.

It

It will not be expected that I should upon this occasion attempt to delineate the constitution of this country in all its beautiful proportions, as it would oblige me, were I equal to the task, greatly to exceed the limits usually assigned to services of this nature. I must content myself with laying before you a few general observations concerning it. And indeed who can take the most superficial view of the British constitution without admiring it and being thankful to God for it!

It unites the spirit, power and splendor of an *Absolute Monarchy* without its tyranny, the wisdom of an *Aristocracy* without its oppression, and the freedom of a *democratic* or popular government without its licentiousness and disorder, into one uniform *compact system* of government, which is the pride of every honest Englishman, and the admiration of every intelligent liberal-minded foreigner. But the distinguishing part of the constitution is its liberty.

The twenty-ninth article of the *Great Charter*, (which was an *acknowledgment* of the

the rights of Englishmen, not a *creation* of them) enacts that no subject shall be exiled, or in any shape whatever molested, either in his person or effects, otherwise than by judgment of his peers, and according to the law of the land. An article so important, says the celebrated Mr. *De Lolme*, in his justly admired treatise on the constitution of England, "that it may be said to comprehend the whole end and design of political societies. And from that moment the English would have been a *free* people, if there were not an immense distance between the making of laws and the observing of them."

The important statute passed in the reign of *Edward I.* *de tallagio non concedendo*, or of not paying taxes without our own consent by our representatives in parliament, who are also to tax themselves equally with those they represent, in conjunction with *Magna Charta*, "forms, says this ingenious writer, the basis of the English constitution. And in the worst of times, when the greatest encroachments were made upon the liberties



ties of the people, even in the time of the *Tudors*, amidst the general wreck of every thing they ought to have held dear, they at least clung obstinately to this plank, which was destined to prove the instrument of their preservation."

A plank, I will venture to add, which can never be relinquished but the liberties of this country will be inevitably overwhelmed.

By the letter as well as spirit of the great charter, we have both life and property secured from lawless invasion, and are not liable to be deprived of either the one or the other without the judgment of our peers or equals, or as we commonly express it trial by jury. The consequence of which institution is, that no man in England ever meets the man of whom he may say, (as the ingenious writer before referred to expresses it) "That man has a power to decide on my death or life." It may be added, or property.

But since it would still be possible that an arret of council, or an arbitrary impost of the crown might be interpreted



as law, the statute *de tallagio non concedendo*, or of not paying taxes without our own consent by our representatives in parliament, expressly secures us against an invasion of our *property* under the *color of law*.

And to complete that system of liberty and independence which is the glory of the British constitution, the *Habeas Corpus* act stands as a noble barrier against any arbitrary encroachments on our *personal liberty*, serves to secure us from unjust imprisonments, suppresses all the resources of oppression, and carries *English Liberty* to its noon-tide point.

Such my friends is the spirit of freedom which gloriously characterises the British constitution. A constitution which has fewer defects and approaches nearer to perfection than any other form of government in the world. A constitution, which I think cannot be known without being admired, cannot be enjoyed without being gratefully applauded; by every one who has sense enough to perceive its excellence, or gratitude to acknowledge the benefits that result from it.

There

There is, I will venture to say, no intelligent whig in the kingdom, no genuine patriot, but will readily declare that his utmost wishes with respect to *civil liberty*, are, that the *present constitution* may continue and flourish in its native original vigor to the remotest posterity.

The friends of liberty are stigmatized by their enemies as *republicans*. But what *proof* do these declaimers offer of the *truth* of the charge they so wantonly exhibit? What *republicanism* is there in wishing well to the constitution under which we live, and guarding against those violations of it which would in the end destroy it?

The Dissenters have of late been frequently held up to view as aiming at the *subversion* of the present government. But it is a notorious fact, that they are upon deep-rooted principle so firmly attached to the constitution as it was settled at the memorable revolution, that there can be no set of people under heaven more ready than they are, to sacrifice their fortunes and their lives in the support and defence of it. The only civil liberty

liberty we desire, is that constitutional liberty to which we have been called ; and of which it is the glory of the illustrious house of *Hanover* to be the guardians.

But the liberty to which as Britons and as Protestants we have been called, is not only civil, but also

## 2. Religious liberty.

By which we mean the liberty we are this moment enjoying; the liberty of worshipping God and attending religious instruction, according to the dictates of our own consciences. A liberty so just, so reasonable, so innocent, that one would think it impossible for any government to think of with-holding it from its subjects.

Religion, all allow, is a personal thing, and to God alone therefore are we accountable for our religious concerns. It is taken for granted that *some one* person has a right to think and act for himself in the affairs of religion, as it would otherwise be impossible to fix any plan of religion for others. Now if any *one* man has this right, it is impossible but that *every* man



man should have this right; because there is no assignable reason why *one man* should have this right, but will be equally a reason why *every man* should have the same right. There is no end of the absurdities which follow upon a contrary supposition. Were we to suppose the magistrate to have a right to chuse a religion for his subjects, amongst the *Brahmins* we should be Idolaters, at *Constantinople* Mahometans, at *Rome* Papists. Nor could the *introduction* of Christianity into the world, be at all defended upon this principle, since this was a religion set up in *opposition* to all religious establishments in being at that time, and the spread of which depended upon their downfall. \*

But plain and simple as the grounds of religious liberty are, obvious one would think to every upright mind, yet what RIVERS (if you read the history of POPERY you will think I ought to have said OCEANS) of blood have been shed to effect its destruction!

Time

\* I would beg leave to refer those of my readers who wish to see the subject of *Religious Liberty* thoroughly discussed, to the Rev. Dr. *Furneaux's* masterly *Essay on Toleration*, in which every objection to this most reasonable and important privilege, is ANNIHILATED.



Time was, even in this land, when religious liberty was driven into corners, and those who presumed to exercise it were exposed to numberless miseries and the most horrid deaths. To say nothing of the horrors of the inquisition, and the many papal persecutions which have disgraced the histories of other kingdoms, I need only refer you to the more than savage cruelties which have been experienced in former ages in our own country.\*

Here

\* See one of the most animated, pathetic descriptions 'tis possible for language to exhibit, of the horrors of popish cruelty in the reign of Queen Mary, in a Poem intitled *Ridley's Ghost*. Some of my readers may not be displeased with the following extract from that incomparable performance.

" 'Tis done — and now the ministers of death,  
 Blood-thirsty sons of Belial! display  
 A hell-wrought scene of horror: Pincers tear  
 The mangled limbs of martyrs, till the blood  
 Spouts at each opening orifice: The rack  
 Dread engine of destruction, half disjoins  
 The shatter'd fabric, stretching to a hair  
 The deeply-tortur'd fibres: Keenly edg'd  
 The lance explores each agony of sense  
 And wakes th' unwilling pang. High on a throne  
 Lowering affliction sits in horrid guise,  
 Black Persecution, and enraptur'd views  
 Each bleeding spectacle, with ghastly smiles  
 And all the savage luxury of joy  
 That baleful furies feel. Her spreading ear  
 Serenely listens to the extorted groan,

Here I might call up to your view a  
*Cranmer*, a *Ridly*, and a *Latimer*, and  
 those other worthies who loved not their  
 lives unto death. But humanity shudders  
 at the sad tale, and knows not how to en-  
 dure the relation of it. Hail, hail, O  
 ye illustrious shades, ye venerable mar-  
 tyr<sup>s</sup>!

Mortality's sad offspring, and enjoys  
 Full harmony of sorrows. Lo! she bids  
 Her crew of blood-hounds heighten every pain  
 And doubles all their tortures. At her word  
 Ascends the sulphurous blaze, and gradual licks,  
 Extremity of anguish! every limb  
 Quick dropping from its joint. From pore to pore  
 The fell destroyer flies, and hunts the soul,  
 Scorch'd, agoniz'd, thro' each distorted vein  
 Replete with liquid burnings. Slow, too slow  
 The flame-pres'd wanderer quits with trembling wing  
 The last faint pulse of life, and joyful leaves  
 The body's baseless frame, one mingled mass  
 Of flesh and embers quivering on the ground.

These are thy triumphs, *POPERY*! the joys  
 Of *ROME*, inhuman *ROME*. Expression fails  
 To paint th' enormous scenery of woe,  
 And softens half its terrors. Oh! my son  
 I saw, abhor'd idea! at the stake  
 Old venerable *LATIMER*, a soul  
 Spotless as infant chastity, than whom  
 No prelate wore a whiter robe, or grac'd  
 A holier mitre. With officious haste  
 A blood-stain'd fury hurl'd a flaming brand  
 Amidst the pile, and taught the towering blaze  
 To raise a thousand agonies of pain  
 In every limb. He smil'd, the martyr smil'd,

tyrs! With whatever barbarity ye were treated by your cruel persecutors, know that there are those risen up at this remote period, who call you blessed! Who count it an honor to embalm your memories with virtuous praise, and to spread laurels on your tombs!

But O rejoice and be exceeding glad that ye are not called, Brethren, to those agonizing conflicts your glorious ancestors endur'd, but with respect to religious as well as civil privileges, are called to Liberty.

**B. 2** **The**  
 Scarce conscious of a pang. His lifted eye,  
 O majesty of virtue! calmly hung  
 On heaven's unclouded arch, and seem'd to shine  
 With something more than human! Rapture seiz'd  
 Each glowing cheek; and flush'd his every look  
 With all a cherub's brightness. At his side,  
 Sad intercourse of sorrows! Raptly grasp'd  
 The social chain, and shar'd with equal zeal  
 Barbarity of torture. — Yes, I shar'd  
 Affliction's deadly cup, and half assum'd  
 His dignity of soul. Ye heavens! what joy  
 Tumultuous heav'd my breast? What manly strength,  
 What energy of firmness, while my ear  
 Enjoy'd his heavenly comforts? Every nerve  
 Confess'd the full Divinity, and steel'd  
 Affrighted nature, till th' angelic band  
 Bright hovering o'er the flame, exulting led  
 Our unembod' d souls to seats of bliss,  
 A paradise of sweets! and gently lull'd  
 The last keen agonies of sense to rest."



The act of toleration secures to us, in a great measure, this invaluable privilege. Nor would we relinquish every hope that this act will be yet further improved and extended, so as to enable every conscientious man, whatever be his distinguishing religious sentiments, to sit quietly under the shade of it without fear of disturbance.

Having thus, very imperfectly, described that liberty to which as *Britons* and as *Protestants* we have been called, I proceed to consider

II. In what respects we have been called to this liberty. To which I answer

1. We have been called to this liberty by the constitution and established laws of our country.

Such is the excellent nature of the British constitution, that the voice of its laws is the voice of liberty. The laws of England, are the laws of liberty. So that from the very genius of the constitution under which it is our happiness to live, we are called to liberty.

Had we been born and educated under an arbitrary government, it might admit of debate whether we were called to liberty or not. It might indeed be very rationally urged, that as all government is the ordinance



nance of God for *good*,\* therefore when it ceases to be for *good*, ceases to answer the end for which it was appointed, it may be lawfully resisted. Or we might very naturally reason thus. As the origin of all power under God is indisputably from the people, (for it cannot be pretended that there is any one particular form of government *divinely appointed*) consequently whenever that *supreme law* the *salus populi*, the safety and happiness of the people, is fundamentally violated, the people have an undoubted right to resume the power into their own hands. But yet still, a wise and a good man would think himself bound to consider how far resistance to a bad government might be likely to produce *more good* in the end than a patient acquiescence in it, and a peaceable endeavor to improve it should any favorable opportunity offer for that purpose; and would never make choice of resistance but as the *last resource*, and when the *probable evils* of resistance are over-ballanced by the *certain evils* resulting from a pusillanimous submission.

But, blessed be God, we are not called

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to

\* Rom. xiii. 4.

*Magistratus ea potestas, hoc munus est, ut praesit, praescribatque RECTA et UTILIA, et conjuncta cum legibus.*

CICERO.

to the difficult task as it sometimes proves, of determining upon the lawfulness of resisting a *bad government*, for the *good government* under which we live calls us to LIBERTY. The language of the constitution, the language of the laws is BE FREE. So that when we are pleading for liberty, shewing the reasonableness, the benefits and the nature and grounds of it; we are not endeavoring, as some either ignorantly or maliciously insinuate, to *subvert* the government, but we are really extolling it, and contributing what we can to its establishment. The LAWS of this land are, as I have before observed, the laws of LIBERTY.

Nor is the King himself above these laws, but bound by them equally with his subjects, and has this therefore to glory in above every other Monarch in the universe, that he is the avowed *patron, protector and guardian* of PUBLIC LIBERTY. For this very purpose were his royal progenitors advanced to the throne of these kingdoms, and for the accomplishment of the same glorious end we trust the sceptre will continue to be sway'd by this illustrious family, to the remotest ages. An *enemy* to liberty, a friend to arbitrary

bitrary power, may wish for the recall of the STUARTS, those banes of public freedom: persons of this stamp may gladly embrace every opportunity of undermining the cause of liberty, because they know whilst liberty flourishes a popish arbitrary prince will never be suffered to reign: but the friends of liberty, of civil and religious liberty, whether Churchmen or Dissenters (for the cause of freedom is a common cause) are *upon principle* the friends of *King George*, whose throne is founded upon *public liberty*, and form'd for its support; so that for a Prince of the *Brunswick* family to attempt to annihilate the public liberty, would be to attempt the annihilation of himself.

As loyal subjects of King GEORGE therefore, and well-wishers to his personal prosperity as well as that of his family, we are called to liberty; which is the voice of the laws, the voice of the constitution of which our illustrious Sovereign is, and I pray God may long continue to be, the appointed distinguished guardian.

2. We have been called to liberty by the many signal providences by which our liberty hath been hitherto preserved to us.



The liberties of this country, both civil and religious, have many times been rolled to the very edge of a tremendous precipice, and threatened with instant and irrecoverable destruction. But in the mount it has been seen that God was there, to rescue us from impending ruin.

When, almost two hundred years ago, the Spanish power attempted to invade this happy isle, and to rivet upon us the chains of slavery, how did the Lord our God, as on this memorable day, cause his mighty wind to blow, so that this vast armament sank like lead in the mighty waters !

And when the emissaries of *Rome* again attempted, by the famous powder plot, to blow up the King, the flower of the nobility, and the representatives of the people assembled to hear the King's speech from the throne ; how seasonably and remarkably was the dark conspiracy brought to light, the snare broken, and happy Britain once more delivered !

Nor must we omit to notice on this auspicious day, the landing of that immortal hero King *William*, and the revolution under God effected by him, whereby British liberty was once more pluck'd



pluck'd as a brand out of the burning.—  
 Whoever is versed, in the slightest manner, in the English history, cannot be ignorant of the importance of this memorable revolution, and of the amazing ease and rapidity with which it was effected. A revolution, which rolled back the constitution from the brink of ruin, and settled it upon such a rock of public liberty, defined and explained in the celebrated *bill of rights*, that we trust neither the gates of earth nor hell will be ever able to prevail against it. And when we consider with what ease and how speedily this great revolution was brought about, who can help acknowledging,—*the Lord was there?*

Nor have there been wanting signal appearances of providence in support of public liberty, in succeeding periods. Witness the sudden unexpected death of Queen *Anne*, whose *wicked ministers* had secretly and traiterously projected, and almost accomplished the exclusion of the present royal family from the throne, and the restoration of the *Stuarts* and *slavery*. Witness the suppression of the *unnatural* rebellions of 1715, and of 1745,  
 together

together with many other favorable interpositions of providence on behalf of public liberty.

And are not all these great events so many calls to liberty; and may it not therefore be said with peculiar propriety, to the inhabitants of this favored isle, *Brethren, ye have been called unto liberty?* Called to it as by a voice from heaven, — by the very genius and spirit of the laws and constitution of your country — and by those many remarkable providences whereby our often endangered liberties have been almost miraculously preserved to us.

But it may be asked,

III. To what are we called respecting this liberty? To which I answer,

1. We are called to the thankful enjoyment of it.

Not to undervalue it as *Esau* did his birthright, but to prize it and thankfully enjoy it. There are many who seem to have no idea of the infinite worth and importance of British Liberty, though they have been nurtured from their infancy in its principles, and are partaking every moment of the numberless blessings that flow from it. It

is a prize put into the hands of those who are insensible of its value. To a feeling liberal mind, what is *life* without *liberty*? We may indeed *breathe* in a state of slavery, but we can scarcely be said *to live*. To have life, property, personal liberty, all that is dear to us as men, suspended upon the caprice of an arbitrary tyrant! To be liable to be sent to the *Bastille*, and there murdered in the night, under color of public authority, without seeing your accusers or having the privilege of a public equitable trial! To be liable to have your property arbitrarily wrested from you! To have your consciences confined, to be prohibited from the worship of God according to the dictates of your own enlightened minds, or exposed to fines, imprisonments and death, for the exercise of your religion—perhaps to the infernal horrors of an inquisition!—O my friends, life upon such terms as these ceases to be a privilege, it is a *burden*.

Rejoice then to think, Brethren, that ye have been and are still called to liberty. Be thankful for the inestimable blessing: thankful to God, and thankful to those



those who are the instruments of communicating this privilege to you. Think not lightly of your civil or religious privileges, but prize them, and bless God for them.

2. Ye are called to the careful preservation of your liberty.

It is a trust committed to you, and which you are under the strongest obligations religiously to preserve and hand down unimpaired to posterity. It is the price of blood. It has been hitherto preserved not without the severest struggles with the sons of violence and tyranny. And shall we after all be regardless of the precious gem, and unconcerned about its preservation? How can we answer it to posterity, who would then have reason to rise up not to bless but to curse us! How can we answer it to God, or our own consciences! Had our predecessors been thus supine and careless; had they united with the sons of venality and corruption who would sell their country, their King and their God for a paltry bribe, what liberty should we have now enjoyed? And how base would it be in us, to contribute to the alienation of any of the privileges we enjoy, from those



those who may succeed us! And must it not be still *more criminal*, to express our approbation of any injurious attempt to despoil of this liberty, those who have an equal right to it with ourselves; by whomsoever or under what pretext soever such attempt be made?

I will not say any of my countrymen *have* done so. But methinks were they any of them to act such a part, I should be ready with an honest fervor to expostulate with them, saying, Brethren, *ye* are called to *liberty*. *Ye* are not called to give your voices for the destruction of your brethren, though they should have erred! *Ye* are not called to appear as the patrons of POPERY and ABSOLUTE POWER, in any part of the world! *Ye* are not called to be the abettors of those who, whether through mistake or design, are unfriendly to the rights of their fellow subjects! But, by every tie of honor, justice, duty, gratitude, yea of piety itself, *ye* are bound, Brethren, to do all you can, according to the sphere in which you move, for the preservation, spread and perfection of public constitutional liberty!

Let the vassals of despotism glory in  
forging

forging chains of slavery for all around them: but let the freeborn subjects of King *George*, glory in the preservation and spread of civil and religious liberty—which ever has been and we hope ever will be, at once the ornament and support of the British throne, and the *brightest jewel* in the British crown.

IV. We are led to consider the caution given us against the abuse of our liberty.—*Only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.*

The best things are liable to the greatest abuse. This is the case with respect to liberty. And it would be uncandid not to acknowledge it has been greatly abused, and that by persons of every party political and religious. It has been abused as an occasion to the flesh; that is to cover the malignity of the heart, and to serve as an excuse for mutual bitterness and rancor one against another. Under the pretext of liberty, *licentiousness* has been introduced, and perhaps the *greatest* by those very people who are the most vehement in their outcries against it. For do they not at the same time indulge themselves in the most *malignant* *infi-*

*insinuations* with respect to the principles and views of those persons, whose political feelings do not happen to be in unison with their own?

But against all such abuses of liberty it behoves us carefully to guard ourselves. We are bound, let us remember, by the strongest ties, as fellow creatures, as fellow subjects, as friends and neighbors, as fellow Christians, in a word as BRITONS and as PROTESTANTS, however we may differ in political or religious sentiments, by love to serve one another. We are called to liberty, and cannot enough rejoice in so invaluable a privilege; but we are not called to an abuse of it as an occasion of indulging our unhallowed fleshly passions, either towards those that are above us or those that are below us, but should esteem it the noblest use we can make of our liberty, to put away all bitterness and wrath and anger and evil-speaking, and to be kind-hearted one to another, and to serve one another in love.

But I cannot take my leave of you, Brethren, without reminding you of that highest of all liberty to which you are called



called as Christians, even *the glorious liberty of the children of God*. A liberty from sin and death and hell ! Spiritual, eternal liberty ! A liberty without which, have what liberty we will besides, we can never be substantially and permanently happy either in this life or the next ! If the Son make you free, the Son of God by his word and spirit and grace, then and not till then shall you be *free indeed* : free from condemnation, sin and ruin, free denizens of the new Jerusalem.

This freedom, this liberty, may we all therefore seek after as our *supreme good*, so shall our happiness on earth, as men, as Britons, and as Christians, be everlastingly succeeded by the perfect uninterrupted happiness of heaven !



THE END.



